



REGIONAL SELF ADVOCACY

NEWSLETTER

SONOMA * NAPA * SOLANO

WINTER 2012



Have you ever been told you can't succeed? I don't listen to people who say this to me because they are so wrong. I was told that I would probably spend the rest of my life in a group home, yet I am living on my own now. I am working on starting my own landscaping business, and am making a book/movie about my life with disabilities. I'm a successful self advocate as well. While I was in group home I couldn't make my own decisions; this was very frustrating. Now that I'm in control there is less turmoil in my life. I'm working on getting back into the ILS program, at my SLS provider.

I want to be a successful member of society. This is hard because society limits our options so much. I have been having a hard time holding a job, which is why I want to work for myself. Society isn't holding me back; it is motivating to try harder every time it tries to put me down.

Your Regional Representative for North Bay, **Jimmy Lee Marks**

SAVE THE DATE!



NEXT REGIONAL SELF ADVOCACY MEETING

Thurs, May 24,
2012
10 am – 1pm
at
NBRC Napa

We want your opinion! See back page to vote on meeting topic and lunch choice.



Don't Stop Believing in Yourself!

By **Michael Statti**

I've been working on my goal of moving to Sacramento for almost 2 years. Later this month I'll take a big step toward achieving my goal. I'll visit some homes in Sacramento to see if I want to move to any of them. Eventually, I want to get a part time job at the state capitol. I want to be part of what's going on in the capitol.



I've lived in Fairfield for 10 years and before that I lived in Napa for 25 years. This move is a chance for me to grow. I'll get to meet a whole bunch of new people. I want other people to know what I'm about and what I can bring to them.

I started thinking about moving to Sacramento 2 years ago, when I went to the capitol with ARCA for Grass Roots Advocacy Day. I saw how important it was to fulfill your dream. When I was a tiny kid, people told me that I couldn't do things. That made me want to accomplish my goals and dreams. I've pushed myself all my life and that's given me confidence. There were times when I hit bumps on the road but I told myself, "Michael that's okay. There's going to be something better coming."

My advice to other people would be: "Don't stop believing in yourself." It may take time, but don't let people stop you! My motto is, "No Stopping Me Now!"



SPEAKING UP FOR CHANGE

By Willy Bengé

I am in a Transition Program in Benicia called C.B.I. I also volunteer at a church in Benicia called Lighthouse. I clean up and water the plants around the outside of the church. I live with my mom, my sister, my uncle and my cousin. I go to school at Solano Community College. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. I attend a garden program which is a one year program. When I am finished with the class I will have my horticulture certificate. I would like to get a job at a nursery.



I went to the advocacy meeting at the office of North Bay Regional Center in Napa to see how I can advocate for myself. I got there by taking the Vallejo transit bus

from Benicia to Vallejo, then the Napa Vine bus. The bus dropped us off about two blocks from NBRC building on the other side of highway 29. We had to walk through a vineyard, cross highway 29, and up a hill then walk one block to the NBRC office. The receptionist gave us directions to the meeting.

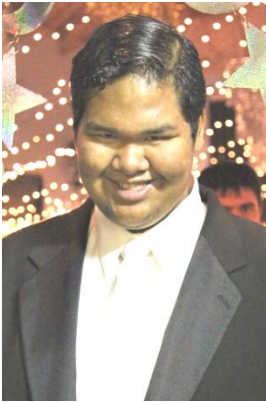
I enjoyed the meeting because I liked the people and the speeches. The people talked about the budget and stopping the cuts that the bills makers want to put in to law. Also at the meeting I voted for someone to go to Sacramento and advocate for disabled people. I voted for this person because I think that he will be great at that job. He talks well and he knows what disabled people need.

I did not particularly like the jungle walk from the bus stop. I think the bus should have a stop on the other side on highway 29. So that disabled people have access to their support agency.



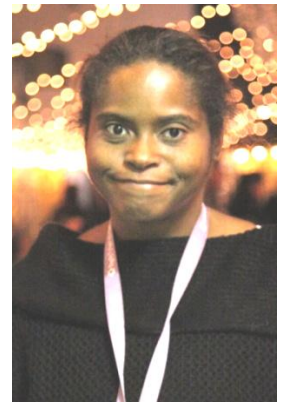
Willy is writing a letter to the Napa County Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC) to ask them to put a bus stop closer to NBRC. If you would like to have a bus stop close to NBRC, you can also write to the PCC at VINE Transit Center, 1151 Pearl St., Napa, CA 94559-2528

Our Stories



Savaing ~ I work at Sunrise Industries, building 7. I live at Corcoran Residence # 49. I used to live at Fairview Developmental Center for 14 years. I volunteer at the Footrace and at the Equestrian program at the farm with Nancy. I help brush Savanna and Duke, the horses. I help saddle the horses. I do rivets at work and make a lot of money every two weeks. I attend People First in Sacramento in June and attend People First group on Wednesdays at Sonoma Developmental Center where I live. I like helping people advocate for themselves.

Rhea ~ My name is Rhea and I am 31 years old. On March 17 I will be 32. I am moving to the community to Rochelle's Home in San Mateo. I attend People First group at Sonoma Developmental Center on Wednesdays. I will be going to work at PFI Inclusion Day Program in San Mateo. I will be doing office work and art work there. I have been at SDC for 2-3 years. When I was living with my grandmother, Ida, I used to volunteer at SFGH in San Francisco. I used to attend Joshua Marie Academy in San Francisco. I used to go to school at McCauley Behavioral Health Services day treatment program when I was littler. I am looking forward to living in my new home soon. I want to stay involved with advocacy when I move out from SDC.



Julia ~ I've been working a lot at Impact cleaning and doing newspapers. I go to Impact's ranch every Thursday. We work on gardening. We use the weed whacker, and for safety we wear gloves, eye glasses, overalls, and closed shoes. There's a dog that likes to play ball. I love to pet the horses. We ride them too. The first time I rode on a horse it was scary. I was afraid of falling, but I didn't. I'm glad I tried something new. I felt proud of myself.



Martin works at Round Table Pizza every week putting together the boxes. He likes his job and likes getting a paycheck. Martin goes to Pace Benicia and says it's good because everyone is nice. He likes all the activities they do, like going for walks in town. For fun Martin likes hanging out with his friends. He likes going to the gym because it's fun and it keeps him healthy. Martin loves music. His favorite kind of music is rock n roll and his favorite artist is Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.



Keith is the Activities Coach at Dungarvin in Vacaville. He volunteers with seniors who have early stages of Alzheimer's or dementia. Keith said they read from the Bible together and sing hymns.

Keith says he has a lot of issues with depression due to his disability. Sometimes it's hard to get out of bed in the morning or he has difficulty expressing himself because it's difficult to deal with depression. Keith says he couldn't function as well as he does without God helping him. Church is an important part of Keith's life. He grew up going to church and goes to services with his family weekly. Keith said, "I appreciate the people who have helped me along the road, especially people who work at my house."



Jenny is a performer and loves singing and doing shows. She's had voice lessons for several years, and graduated from music college. Jenny has performed in Annie, Peter Pan, Les Mis, High School Musical, and Dream Street.

Jenny will be starting her new job at Olive Garden next week. Jenny says her job will be to roll silverware before the restaurant opens, which is perfect for her because she likes quiet. During her job interview the manager asked why Jenny wants to work at Olive Garden. Jenny answered, "Because I want to be challenged."

Good luck at your new job Jenny!

How Would Budget Cuts Impact You?



Elizabeth ~ You do not know me. I am from Solano Diversified Services in Vallejo. I used to have a paycheck, when things got bad I lost everything due to the budget crisis in our state. I need my pay check that I got



through my program. I went to work and I had a paying job. We may be disabled and different, but we have feelings too. Please let my voice be counted, too. We have needs too. We need to be heard and not silent with nothing to say.

Warren ~ I might not be able to pay rent. Bills might not be able to be paid, like monthly bills. Will not be able to buy things I need, like groceries and clothes and shoes. Will not be able to do laundry. If programs are cut due to budget cuts, we will not be able to socialize with friends. Affect jobs. If no program, we can't make speeches or discuss issues. We would like to be heard and not silent with nothing to say. We having feelings, a voice and we have a need, too.



Sammy ~ Sammy likes going to Solano Diversified Services day program. He would be sad if he couldn't go anymore. He enjoys socializing and going into the community with his friends, he likes working at city hall. He also likes doing math, drawing pictures, and playing games.

Kelley ~ I would be mad if I could not go to Solano Diversified Services day program. I like to work and earn money. I like to see my friends. I would have to stay at home and be bored.



Ralph ~ If I did not have a program to go to I would feel very sad. I would feel disappointed and I would lose my job.

Kathy ~ If the Solano Diversified Services closed I would feel bad because I need to get out and I want my job back soon.



Sabrina ~ If I did not have a program to attend I would feel sad. I would not have a job and no money. I could not pay my bills.



George ~ George feels he will not get anything, no jobs, half of his medical gone. He couldn't make speeches or discuss issues.

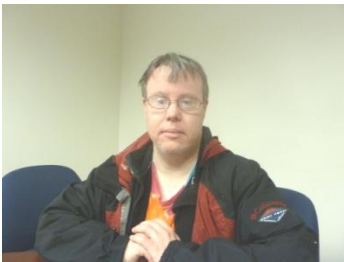


Koui ~ I will not be able to make friends and I want to be able to go out.

Christine ~ How would the budget cuts affect you? It would affect me if it took our jobs away and from me because I really need the money so I can pay my monthly bills off. I live on my own. I also need the money for my groceries, laundry, and clothes and shoes when needed. My job and my money are very important to me because I really need it. It would also affect me and all the rest of us if it took all the day programs from us, as well.



Hazel ~ I would be bored and sad.



My name is **Andy Lunceford**. I live in my own condo in Napa. I have Aldea for supported living and I work at WineBev. I'm on the board of Area Board 4 because I want to help people live good lives.

When I was born, there were no services to help people with disabilities or their families. My mom was a teacher and my dad worked for TWA and he had been a Marine. It was very hard that there were no services to help my parents.

I'm starting to get more concerned about the budget. Some people can't do things and need help. I have many friends who need help and it's getting harder for them to get services they need. One of my friends has Downs Syndrome and he's getting either dementia or Alzheimer's. His sister helps him a lot but he needs more services, not less. Cut backs are hard. People are getting scared and furious. Health and safety are critical.

Relationship Advice

By Jeana Eriksen, Area Board 4
Board Member



If you are interested in meeting new people and/or going out on a date, it is

important to know that there are certain ways to be safe. First, if you are interested in just meeting new people places that you can go to meet new people are:

1. Churches
2. School/ taking a class
3. Local coffee shop
4. Work Place
5. Day Programs

When you are meeting with someone new here are some safety tips:

Never give out your home address – be vague, for example: “I live around the corner or down town.” Stay in an open area with someone. Warnings to look for: if some ask you where you live right away, **DON'T TELL THEM.**

Places to meeting for a date that are safe:

1. Lunch
2. Informal dinner
3. Meet for coffee, for example: Starbucks
4. Go to a mall and hang out.



You want to go out in a public area where there are a lot of people.

Conversation openers for breaking the ice to talk to someone:

1. Books you have read.
2. Music you like.
3. Movies you enjoy
4. Sports that you're interested in.

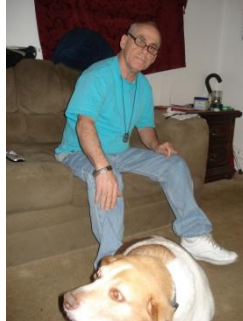
Don't give your home telephone number, if you have a cell phone number and you are comfortable giving out that number then do that, or you can ask them for their telephone number instead and let them know that you will call them. That way you have control over the security and safety of yourself.

My favorite place is Starbucks, seeing the same people that go there for coffee. Over time I have gotten familiar with the same people and have become friends with them, talking with them every time I go.

I would like to encourage you to go out and meet people but of course, being safe about it.

Opportunities to Get Involved!

You Can Help with a Training



The advocacy group at Solano Diversified Services said they wanted to learn about supported living. Christine, Warren, and Tom helped give a training on supported living. They told the group about how they reached their goal of living in their own homes.

If there's a training that your advocacy group would like to have, let us know!

You Can Tell Legislators about Your Life

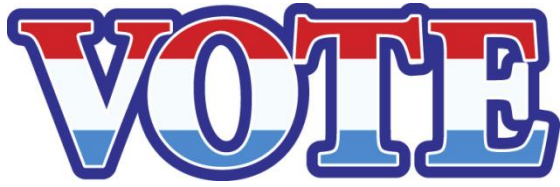


Area Board 4 is having a Town Hall meeting to tell legislators or their staff about how budget cuts impacts peoples' lives.

Tell your story...what services are important to you, what services do you need to be safe, healthy, and part of your community?

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
Thursday, April 5, 2012
State Building, Room 410
50 "D" Street, Santa Rosa

Seating is limited so if you'd like to go, please call Area Board 4 at 707-648-4073. If you can't go to the Town Hall, you can send in a letter. If you'd like help writing a letter, contact Cindy Ruder at 707-953-8403 or cindy.ruder@scdd.ca.gov



We're planning the next regional self advocacy meeting and there are 2 things we'd like to hear from you about.

1. At the last regional meeting in January we talked about ideas for future meetings. The two top suggestions were to talk about jobs and speaking up (advocacy). What do you think? Check one of the boxes to let us know what you would you like to hear a speaker talk about .

☐ jobs and earning more money



or

☐ speaking up (advocacy)



2. What would you like to have for lunch at the regional self advocacy meeting? NBRC has provided pizza for our previous meetings. Some people said they would like a different lunch or something healthier. Please let us know what you prefer. Whichever gets the most vote wins!

For lunch I would like to have:

☐ pizza



or

☐ sub sandwich & fruit?



Send your vote to Cindy Ruder by mailing, calling, emailing, or texting:
Area Board 4, 236 Georgia Street #201, Vallejo CA 94590
707-953-8403 cindy.ruder@scdd.ca.gov

Thank you!